

SPOOKED

THE TRUMP DOSSIER,
BLACK CUBE,
AND THE RISE OF
PRIVATE SPIES

BARRY MEIER



HARPER

An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers

SPOOKED. Copyright © 2021 by Barry Meier. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information, address HarperCollins Publishers, 195 Broadway, New York, NY 10007.

HarperCollins books may be purchased for educational, business, or sales promotional use. For information, please email the Special Markets Department at SPsales@harpercollins.com.

FIRST EDITION

Designed by Nancy Singer

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data has been applied for.

ISBN 978-0-06-295068-0

21 22 23 24 25 LSC 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

NOTES

PROLOGUE: STALKING MR. STEELE

- 1 MI6: The Secret Intelligence Service, the United Kingdom's overseas intelligence agency, is commonly known as MI6.
- 3 a new editor of *Vanity Fair*: The editor was Radhika Jones.
- 3 published a profile of Steele: Howard Blum's profile of Steele appeared in the April 2017 issue of *Vanity Fair*.
- 4 a woman who claimed to be a journalist: This incident was reported by Agence France-Press in a May 18, 2019, article, "Consultant poses as journalist in Monsanto trial."
- 4 locked in a dispute with three businessmen: This claim by Neil Gerrard is contained in a 2019 lawsuit he filed against Diligence International and ENRC.
- 4 The chase ended with: In published reports, the investigative firm involved in the Geneva incident denied any wrongdoing and Credit Suisse said the news media had sensationalized the incident.
- 5 a book about a former FBI agent: My book about Robert Levinson, *Missing Man*, was published in 2016 by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- 6 When I approached Glenn Simpson: He also did not respond to a series of questions sent to him during the reporting for this book.
- 6 Neither would his partner: Peter Fritsch also did not respond to written questions sent to him during the reporting for this book.
- 6 A British journalist described Ian: The journalist was Nick Davies in his book *Hack Attack*.

- 6 “Spies Island”: The *60 Minutes* episode in which Ian Withers appeared was broadcast on March 26, 1989.
- 7 Jane Mayer, in a profile of Christopher Steele: Mayer’s piece appeared in the March 12, 2018, issue of *The New Yorker*, “Christopher Steele, the Man Behind the Trump Dossier.”
- 11 “We do not intend to respond”: email from Arthur Snell of Orbis to me, October 12, 2020.

CHAPTER 1: JOURNALISM FOR RENT

- 16 One ex-colleague dubbed him “Shaggy”: Dana Milbank described Simpson in a January 12, 2018, column he wrote for *The Washington Post*, “I Know Glenn Simpson. He Is Not a Hillary Clinton Hit Man.”
- 16 Simpson’s desk was a thicket: The description is drawn from Matt Flegenheimer’s article in *The New York Times* on January 8, 2018, “Fusion GPS Founder Hauled from the Shadows for the Russia Election Investigation.”
- 17 to buy the *Journal*’s parent company: The newspaper was owned by Dow Jones & Company.
- 18 *Journal* reporters felt whipsawed: David Carr, the late media editor for *The New York Times* chronicled concerns expressed by *Journal* reporters in a piece published on December 14, 2009.
- 21 that mentioned Browder’s expulsion: That article, “How Russian Tycoons Got Wealthy,” was published on March 28, 2006.
- 22 One was Oleg Deripaska: An article by Glenn Simpson and Mary Jacoby that mentioned Deripaska, “How Lobbyists Help Ex-Soviets Woo Washington,” was published in *The Wall Street Journal* on April 17, 2007.
- 22 The other was a well-known Washington lobbyist: An article by Glenn Simpson and Mary Jacoby that mentioned Paul Manafort, “McCain Consultant Is Tied to Work for Ukraine Party,” was published in *The Wall Street Journal* on May 14, 2008.
- 23 When Simpson started writing about Kazakhstan: In 2008, Simpson and his reporting partner would write a series of articles for *The Wall Street Journal* about the country’s president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, his ex son-in-law, Rakhat Aliyev, and a Kazakh-connected consultant in Washington, D.C., Alexander Mirtchev. The articles included “Kazakh Leader’s Daughter Monitored U.S. Bribe Case,” May 12, 2008 (on which Mary Jacoby was

a coauthor); “Kazakhstan Corruption: Exile Alleges New Details,” July 22, 2008; “Perle Linked to Kurdish Oil Plan,” July 29, 2008; “Oilman Protests Prosecution Delay,” September 25, 2008; “Russia’s Deripaska Faces Western Investigations,” October 10, 2008.

- 23 Rakhat Aliyev: In 2015, he was found dead in a prison cell in Austria. His death by hanging was ruled a suicide.
- 23 the U.S. Justice Department charged an American consultant: That consultant was James H. Giffen. He asserted at this trial that he was acting with the approval of CIA. Most charges against him were dropped and he pleaded guilty to a minor tax charge. Nursultan Nazarbayev, the Kazakh president, denied he had received bribes.
- 26 dubbed “Operation Hellenic”: I obtained several interim reports produced during Operation Hellenic that were dated September 2007, October 2007, November 2007, and January 2008. Several corporate investigators were unable to identify the firm that produced them.
- 27 In a subsequent report: “Operation Hellenic” report dated November 2, 2007.
- 29 a 2009 State Department cable: The cable, which is dated January 13, 2009, was among the trove of documents disclosed by WikiLeaks. The U.S. ambassador in Kazakhstan was then Richard Hoagland.
- 29 with the help of Baker and Hostetler LLC: This State Department document was released by Wikileaks. Over the years, Baker and Hostetler has used differing styles for its corporate name. It currently uses BakerHostetler and I have used it throughout.

CHAPTER 2: “LAPDANCE ISLAND”

- 33 When a freelance private spy named Rob Moore: I first wrote about Rob Moore’s work for K2 Intelligence in *The New York Times* on April 27, 2018, “A Spy’s Tale: The TV Prankster Who Says He Became a Double Agent.”
- 34 “Lapdance Island”: a short clip from the show survives, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ez5WYdGHoCw>.
- 36 “Commercial Spies Tap State Records”: This *Guardian* article was published on May 11, 1971.
- 37 Mary Cuddehe, described how the Kroll official: Her article about Kroll’s efforts to recruit her appeared in *The Atlantic* magazine on August 2, 2010, “A Spy in the Jungle.”

- 39 “Spider-Man, the Hulk—I really owe my business”: This anecdote comes from William Finnegan’s profile of Jules Kroll that appeared in *The New Yorker* on October 19, 2009, “The Secret Keeper.”
- 40 T. Boone Pickens, complained that Kroll Associates: The corporate raider was quoted by Douglas Frantz in a *Los Angeles Times* article of October 9, 1988, “Kroll—Wall Street’s Super Sleuth.”
- 40 “Wall Street’s private eye”: This description of Jules Kroll was contained in a March 4, 1985, article by Fred Blakeley in *The New York Times*, “Wall Street’s Private Eye.”
- 40 “Many of us are corporate misfits”: That lawyer, Charles E. Bohlen Jr., was quoted in that same *Los Angeles Times* article.
- 41 a future U.S. president, Donald J. Trump: The anecdote about Jules Kroll’s dealings with Trump over an Atlantic City casino is drawn from an article by Christopher Byron in *New York* magazine, “High Spy,” published on May 13, 1991.
- 42 But an article in *New York* magazine: This discrepancy was noted in Christopher Byron’s 1991 article “High Spy.”
- 42 Hakluyt used a similar tactic: An account of the investigative firm’s infiltration of Greenpeace appeared in *The Sunday Times* (of London) on June 17, 2001. In that account, Hakluyt declined to comment and Shell and BP said they were not aware of the strategies used by investigators.
- 43 He was a German-born spook: The name of the operative who infiltrated Greenpeace was Manfred Schlickenrieder.
- 43 Diligence, got caught: A detailed account of Diligence’s escapade, which I summarized, was written by Eamon Javers for *BusinessWeek* magazine and appeared on February 26, 2007, “Spies, Lies and KPMG.”
- 43 according to an account in *Bloomberg Businessweek* magazine: That piece by Eamon Javers, “Spies, Lies and KPMG,” was published on February 6, 2007.
- 44 his firm got sued: Diligence insisted that all its activities were legal. It was sued by both KPMG and the investment fund, IPOC International Growth Fund Limited. All the legal cases were settled or resolved without any acknowledgement of wrongdoing.
- 46 A law firm fired Kroll Associates: This incident and other problems Kroll encountered in the 1990s were chronicled by William M. Carley of *The*

Wall Street Journal in a November 17, 1994, article, “Kroll Calling: Big Detective Agency Finds Sleuthing Tougher in the ’90’s.”

- 46 Charges in Brazil against several Kroll employees including Charlie Carr were dropped in 2012 for lack of evidence, according to published accounts.
- 46 One former FBI agent told *Vanity Fair* magazine: The account of Kroll’s work for R. Allen Stanford was detailed by Bryan Burrough in a June 22, 2009, article, “Pirate of the Caribbean.”
- 47 “pure cockroach”: Stanford’s instructions to a Kroll operative were first disclosed by reporters for McClatchy in a November 29, 2012, article, “Ponzi Artist Investigated Ex-State Department Official, Records Show.” The Kroll executive who undertook that assignment was Tom Cash, a former DEA agent.
- 47 A construction industry trade group: The group that sued Kroll Inc. for its alleged failure to disclose its ties to Allen Stanford was the National Electrical Contractors Association.
- 48 “clearly a blemish”: Jules Kroll made those comments to James Freeman of *The Wall Street Journal* in a September 4, 2010, article, “Where There’s Corruption, There’s Opportunity.”
- 48 merged Kroll with an armored car maker: The 1997 merger involved O’Gara, Hess & Eisenhardt.
- 48 sold Kroll to a big insurance company: The insurer was Marsh & McLennan.
- 49 raided by the police: Charges against Carr were dropped due to lack of evidence
- 53 “Victims of Chrysotile Asbestos”: The short film can be viewed at <https://vimeo/171175438>.

CHAPTER 3: “OPPO”

- 56 Alex Yearsley: He did not respond to repeated requests for comment during the course of reporting for this book.
- 56 an obscure company in Ukraine: RosUkrEnergo was the name of the intermediary company involved in the Ukraine natural gas pipeline.
- 57 a front-page article for the *Journal*: Glenn Simpson’s article about Semion Mogilevich appeared on December 26, 2006, “U.S. Probes Possible Crime Links to Russian Natural Gas Deal.”

- 59 “Thank you, America, our people will soon be safe”: The description of the sheik’s publicity campaign was drawn from an article in *The Guardian* on June 7, 2010, “A Very Peculiar Coup: UK Solicitor in Plot to Take Over Emirate.”
- 59 Simpson was paid \$40,000 by a lobbying firm: Simpson’s involvement in lobbying on behalf of Sheik Khalid bin Saqr al-Qasimi was disclosed by an article in *The Hill* by Kevin Bogardus on November 4, 2009, “Deposed Sheik Hires Former Reporter in Lobbying Effort.”
- 60 “out of an abundance of caution”: Simpson’s reason for registering as a lobbyist appeared in the same *Hill* article.
- 60 his best-selling memoir, *Red Notice*: Bill Browder’s book, *Red Notice: A True Story of High Finance, Murder, and One Man’s Fight for Justice* was published in 2015 by Simon & Schuster.
- 62 charged that he had used a racial epithet: Email from Shawn Crispin to Simon Mennell dated December 16, 2004.
- 64 Isikoff learned that the Democratic National Committee: Michael Isikoff’s article about the use of private operatives by the Bill Clinton campaign appeared in *The Washington Post* on July 26, 1992, “Clinton Team Works to Deflect Allegations on Nominee’s Private Life.”
- 65 *Dirty Little Secrets*: The book by Larry Sabato and Glenn Simpson, *Dirty Little Secrets: The Persistence of Corruption in American Politics*, was published in 1996 by Times Books/Random House.
- 65 Terry Lenzner: He died in April 2020 after a long illness.
- 66 whose company sold dietary supplements: The name of the company was Melaleuca Incorporated.
- 66 an article in *Mother Jones* magazine: The piece about Frank VanderSloot by Stephanie Mencimer appeared in *Mother Jones* on February 6, 2012, “Pyramid-Like Company Ponies Up \$1 Million for Mitt Romney.”
- 67 Strassel wrote a column about the episode: Kimberly Strassel’s article about Frank VanderSloot and Fusion GPS appeared in *The Wall Street Journal* on May 10, 2012, “Trolling for Dirt on the President’s List.”

CHAPTER 4: THE LONDON INFORMATION EXCHANGE

- 73 Eurasian Natural Resources Corporation: Throughout the reporting of this book, ENRC and its outside media representative did not respond to inquiries or written questions.
- 73 the “Kazakh Trio” or the “Trio”: The three oligarchs who composed the Trio were Patokh Chodiev, Alexander Machkevitch, and Alijan Ibragimov.
- 73 one titled *Londongrad*: That book, which Hollingsworth coauthored with Stewart Lansley, was published in 2010 by Fourth Estate.
- 74 his corporate bio stated: Robert Trevelyan was involved with numerous companies. This bio was on the website of one called Luxian.
- 75 Trevelyan made copies of ENRC hard drives: ENRC made this allegation in numerous lawsuits.
- 75 One of his supposed partners in that enterprise: ENRC made this claim in a 2019 lawsuit filed in London against Mark Hollingsworth.
- 75 a corporate intelligence firm hired by the company: The firm was Nardello & Company.
- 75 then publicly traded: ENRC shares were delisted on the London Stock Exchange in 2013.
- 76 “In my view, this is pretty devastating”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Glenn Simpson, July 28, 2011.
- 76 “I have to brief client orally on Monday”: Email from Glenn Simpson to Mark Hollingsworth, November 30, 2011.
- 76 “Our mutual friend Magic”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Glenn Simpson, January 29, 2012.
- 77 he asked a sommelier to serve him: This anecdote is taken from a piece by Katrina Mason in *The Financial Times* on September 1, 2017, “Russian Lobbyist Rinat Akhmetshin on That Notorious Meeting at Trump Tower.”
- 78 a Global Witness investigator: That investigator was Daniel Balint-Kurti.
- 79 Baruch Halpert: He did not respond to numerous messages seeking comment.
- 79 IMR had hired a private spying firm to investigate Akhmetshin’s suspected role: My description of GlobalSource’s investigation of Rinat Akhmetshin is drawn from court filings made in connection with a so-called 1782 proceeding brought by IMR in 2014 against him. Section 1782

is part of a federal statute that allows a litigant in a foreign proceeding to seek discovery from a person in the United States.

80 “There is a lot of shit”: Affidavit of Akis Phanartzis of GlobalSource dated March 20, 2014.

81 “We requested that they provide us copies”: Affidavit of Raphael Rahav of GlobalSource dated March 21, 2014.

81 28,000 files belonging to IMR: Affidavit of Tadeusz Jarmolkiewicz, general counsel of IMR, dated March 26, 2014.

82 “You know, people often ask me for information”: Deposition of Rinat Akhmetshin filed May 18, 2015.

CHAPTER 5: BAD BLOOD

86 “B&W’s tactics aren’t unheard of in high-stakes litigation”: Suein Hwang and Milo Geylin of *The Wall Street Journal* reported about IGI’s dossier on February 1, 1996, “Getting Personal: Brown & Williamson Has 500-Page Dossier Attacking Chief Critic.”

86 “Now he is slimy”: That quote appeared in Judy Bachrach’s profile of Terry Lenzner, “The President’s Private Eye,” which was published in the September 1998 issue of *Vanity Fair*.

86 as apparent payback: A spokesman for the Koch brothers disputed Mayer’s account and told the *The New York Times* he considered it “grossly inaccurate”.

86 *Dark Money*: Jane Mayer’s book *Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right* was published in 2016 by Doubleday.

87 Felch charged in the article: Jason Felch’s article about Occidental College’s reporting policies appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* on December 6, 2013, “College Received More Sex Assault Allegations than It Reported.”

87 and had collaborated with him: That former *Los Angeles Times* reporter was Ralph Frammalino.

88 Felch later said: He made that comment to Ravi Somaiya of *The New York Times* for an article, “Los Angeles Times Fires Writer of Articles on College,” that appeared on March 16, 2014. Jason Felch did not respond to emails seeking comment for this book.

- 88 the *Los Angeles Times* was forced to run a major correction: The correction and editor's note about Jason Felch's piece appeared on March 14, 2014.
- 89 U.S. authorities were investigating the company: Federal prosecutors would eventually indict a director of Derwick Associates on money-laundering charges and the firm's chief executive remained, at the time of this writing, under criminal investigation.
- 89 José de Córdoba: He did not respond to emails seeking comment.
- 89 U.S. authorities were investigating the company: To date, Derwick Associates has not been charged with wrongdoing. At the time of this writing, one of its co-founders, who has denied any wrongdoing, remains under scrutiny, according to a 2019 article in the *Miami Herald*.
- 90 "First, big congrats on the big P": Email from Peter Fritsch to John Carreyrou, May 3, 2015.
- 91 "I do know Riedel": Email from John Carreyrou to Peter Fritsch, May 3, 2015.
- 92 a 2018 best-selling book, *Bad Blood*: John Carreyrou's book, *Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup*, was published in 2018 by Alfred A. Knopf.
- 93 "Hey, so something came up": Email from Peter Fritsch to John Carreyrou, May 8, 2015.
- 93 "I'm working on a very serious story": Email from John Carreyrou to Peter Fritsch, May 8, 2015.
- 94 "Is she a cult leader?": Email from Peter Fritsch to John Carreyrou, May 11, 2015.
- 94 "They just named a new GC": Email from Peter Fritsch to John Carreyrou, May 8, 2015.
- 95 "You are talking to the wrong dude": Email from Peter Fritsch to John Carreyrou, June 4, 2015.
- 95 "what I can certainly do without is patronizing commentary": Email from John Carreyrou to Peter Fritsch, June 4, 2015.
- 98 "I would like to not mention Carreyrou by name": Email from Peter Fritsch to Russell Carollo, August 2, 2015.
- 98 In time, Elizabeth Holmes faced: Both Holmes and her partner, Ramesh Balwani, were later charged with fraud. They pled innocent and their trial, at the time of this writing, was scheduled for March 2021.

98 *The Washington Post*, who was doing a piece about Fusion GPS: That piece by Jack Gillum and Shawn Boburg ran on December 11, 2017, “Journalism for Rent’: Inside the Secretive Firm behind the Trump Dossier.”

CHAPTER 6: UKRAINE TOMORROW

102 a journalist with an Israeli television show: The name of the show was *Uvda*.

102 the show was doing an episode about Black Cube: In 2019, Black Cube sued the program, *Uvda*, and its chief correspondent in London claiming the episode had defamed the firm. While maintaining that stance, Black Cube dropped the lawsuit in 2020 saying it couldn’t prove financial damages, a requisite of British libel law.

103 when the Harvey Weinstein case erupted: In writing about the Weinstein case, I drew on two books published in 2019 that chronicled the episode and the role of private operatives in it. The book by Ronan Farrow of *The New Yorker*, *Catch and Kill: Lies, Spies, and a Conspiracy to Protect Predators*, was published by Little, Brown. The other book by two *New York Times* reporters, Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey, *She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story That Helped Ignite a Movement*, was published by Penguin Press.

106 “You have come across Frank Timis’ name”: Internal document distributed by Black Cube.

106 “It’s like creating a play”: The Black Cube advisor was quoted in an article by Bradley Hope and Jacquie McNish that ran in *The Wall Street Journal* on June 18, 2019, “Black Cube: The Bumbling Spies of the Private Mossad.”

106 two real estate developers: The developers were brothers, Vincent and Robert Tchenguiz.

107 Firtash was indicted: <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/six-defendants-indicted-alleged-conspiracy-bribe-government-officials-india-mine-titanium>.

109 peppered them with questions about George Soros: The saga of Black Cube’s operation in Hungary was chronicled by Lili Bayer of *Politico* on July 16, 2018, “Israeli Intelligence Firm Targeted NGOs during Hungary’s Election Campaign.”

110 “I was never a Bond girl”: Stella Penn Pechanac’s comments appeared in *The Daily Mail* on November 30, 2019.

- 110 “I don’t feel guilty about anything”: Seth Freedman’s comments were broadcast by the BBC on January 13, 2020.
- 111 when Ronan Farrow of *The New Yorker* disclosed it: Farrow’s article appeared on November 6, 2017, “Harvey Weinstein’s Army of Spies.”

CHAPTER 7: TABLE NUMBER 6

- 113 the Russian-owned real estate company: Prevezon Holdings was based in Cyprus.
- 116 later posted on YouTube: The scene is still there: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryVavTF6hR0>.
- 117 “Fighting Putin Doesn’t Make You a Saint”: That article by Jason Motlagh appeared on December 31, 2015.
- 118 some \$530,000 in fees and expenses: This figure was cited by Chuck Ross in an article in *The Daily Caller* that appeared on November 21, 2017, “Fusion GPS Bank Records Show Russia-Related Payments.”
- 120 told Bloomberg News: That article by Stephanie Baker and Irina Reznik appeared on December 21, 2017, “Mueller Is Looking into a U.S. Foundation Backed by Russian Money.”
- 121 “I can prove in court that Browder”: Andrei Nekrasov made those remarks in an article by Henry Johnson published in *Foreign Policy* on June 10, 2018.
- 123 when the panel ruled, her prediction proved true: John Moscow was barred from representing Prevezon in October 2016.

CHAPTER 8: GLENN TOURAGE

- 127 at a conference of documentary filmmakers and reporters: The conference was called the Double Exposure Film Festival and was sponsored by 100Reporters, a journalism group.
- 128 He challenged the anti-abortion group: Jackie Calmes wrote about anti-abortion videos for *The New York Times* in “Planned Parenthood Videos were Altered, Analysis Finds” on August 25, 2017.
- 130 a court in Ghana: Paul Singer and his vulture investing tactics were described by Sheelah Kolhatkar in *The New Yorker*, August 20, 2018, “Paul Singer, Doomsday Investor.”
- 131 seeking data about U.S. military sales to Argentina: These requests are detailed on a spreadsheet maintained by Carollo.

- 131 negative articles about another hedge fund: That fund was Gramercy Funds Management; a spokesperson for it declined comment.
- 132 “*The New York Times*, I know they work with Fusion”: Silverstein was quoted by Rowan Scarborough in *The Washington Times*, December 10, 2017, “Fusion GPS Tried to Tie Trump to Clinton’s Pedophile Pal Epstein as Part of Smear Campaign.”
- 133 wrote an article about Robert LiButti: Michael Isikoff’s article was published by *Yahoo! News* on March 7, 2016, “Trump Challenged Over Ties to Mob-Linked Gambler with Ugly Past.”
- 134 “he will be the first big-time developer since Josef Stalin”: Jeff Grocott wrote about Trump’s ambitions in a 1996 article in the *Moscow Times*, “Trump Places Bet on New Moscow Skyline.”
- 138 “1. He confirmed that there is what he called”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Christopher Steele, August 2013.
- 138 a London lawyer representing Oleg Deripaska: That lawyer was Paul Hauser of Bryan Cave.
- 138 in the event the oligarch won a favorable court judgment: Oleg Deripaska stopped pursuing his lawsuit against Paul Manafort.
- 139 as informants: A *New York Times* article published on September 1 2018, “Agents Tried to Flip Oligarchs. The Fallout Spread to Trump” described Bruce Ohr’s efforts to recruit Oleg Deripaska.
- 140 The get-together between Deripaska and Bruce Ohr didn’t go well: The meeting was described by Kenneth Vogel and Matthew Rosenberg of *The New York Times* on September 1, 2018, “Agents Tried to Flip Russian Oligarchs. The Fallout Spread to Trump.”

CHAPTER 9: THE PEE TAPE

- 143 The businessman, David Geovanis: He didn’t respond to emails seeking comment.
- 145 Damian Paletta: He didn’t respond to emails seeking comment.
- 147 Steele secretly dispatched his collector: Steele’s collector, Igor Danchenko, told the FBI this in January 2017.
- 148 Catherine Belton, was a “friend” of his: Belton’s piece about Sergei Millian was published in *The Financial Times* on November 1, 2016, “The Shadowy Emigré Touting Trump.”

- 148 Broeksmit soon got a call from Simpson: David Enrich of *The New York Times* described the interactions between Belton, Simpson, and Broeksmit in his 2019 book, *Dark Towers: Deutsche Bank, Donald Trump, and an Epic Trail of Destruction* (HarperCollins).
- 149 “Don’t you have any meeting space”: Steele’s comments were reported in *The Washington Post* by Tom Hamburger and Rosalind S. Helderman on February 6, 2018, “Hero or Hired Gun? How a British Former Spy Became a Flash Point in the Russia Investigation.”
- 151 It was by Michael Isikoff of *Yahoo! News*: his article about Carter Page appeared on September 23, 2016, “US Intel Officials Probe Ties Between Trump Advisor and Kremlin.”
- 152 passed on business leads: This description of the relationship between Winer and Steele is drawn from the report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.
- 153 Deripaska’s lawyer believes “that the Ukrainians have politicised”: Email from Christopher Steele to Bruce Ohr, October 18, 2006.
- 154 a “Hail Mary pass”: In 2019, the Justice Department released memos related to the dossier that Bruce Ohr wrote in 2016.
- 154 Corn’s article appeared a few days after Comey’s decision: That article was published on the website of *Mother Jones* on October 31, 2016.
- 155 “I was completely taken aback”: Mike Gaeta made this statement during 2019 congressional testimony during which he was not identified by name. However, that witness’s description of his relationship to Steele made it clear it was Gaeta.
- 155 Steele would insist that he hadn’t agreed: Steele made that statement in a press release issued by Orbis Business Intelligence in December 2019, after the publication of the Horowitz report, and in which he criticized several aspects of the report. Among other things, he said he couldn’t have agreed as an individual to become an FBI source because of his relationship with the British government.
- 156 three oligarchs who controlled Alfa Bank: The bank’s three founders were Mikhail Fridman, Petr Aven, and German Khan.
- 157 in anticipation of the *Times* story: This detail was cited by Michael Isikoff and David Corn in their book *Russian Roulette*.
- 157 *The Intercept*: That article “Here’s the Problem with the Story Connecting Russia to Donald Trump’s Email Server” appeared on November 1, 2016.

- 157 when the *Times*' long-awaited "pinging" article: That article by Eric Lichtblau and Steven Lee Myers, "Investigating Donald Trump, FBI Sees No Clear Link to Russia," was posted on October 31, 2016.
- 159 Carter Page, Paul Manafort, and Michael Flynn: Carter Page was not charged with any wrongdoing. Paul Manafort was convicted of tax fraud charges. Michael Flynn admitted lying to FBI agents about his conversations with a Russian ambassador though he later recanted that admission. George Papadopoulos pled guilty to making false statements to the FBI. In 2020, Donald Trump pardoned Manafort, Flynn and Papadopoulos.

CHAPTER 10: OUTED, EPISODE 1

- 164 Shell, a Dutch company, and Eni, an Italian firm: As of this writing, prosecutors in Italy were pursuing charges against officials of Shell and Eni. The companies have denied wrongdoing.
- 166 the Kusto Group: A spokesman for the company denied it had hired K2 Intelligence.
- 168 "For me, watching this film was a surreal experience": Simon Taylor made those remarks in 2014 while accepting the Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5n5RNNNCGMs>.
- 168 It was titled *Agent Zigzag*. Ben MacIntyre's book, *Agent Zigzag: A True Story of Nazi Espionage, Love, and Betrayal*, was published in 2007 by Bloomsbury.
- 169 "It is our strong view that the preferred way forward": Email from Simon Taylor to Rob Moore, August 5, 2014.
- 170 "For the sake of my family's safety": Email from Rob Moore to Simon Taylor, August 11, 2014.
- 170 Global Witness had given away the game: Simon Taylor is quoted in my *New York Times* article as saying that it wasn't up to Rob Moore to set the timetable for his unmasking because his undercover actions might jeopardize anti-asbestos activists. "He is not in a position to play God," Taylor said.
- 171 a reporter affiliated with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists: That reporter was Jim Morris.
- 173 the publication *New Matilda*: *New Matilda* published three articles by Michael Gillard about the Rob Moore/K2 Intelligence saga that appeared on March 5, 2017, April 23, 2017, and April 29, 2018.

- 173 “Brother of BBC boss”: The article by Michael Gillard and Jon Ungoe-Thomas appeared in *The Sunday Times* (of London), January 29, 2017.
- 175 he was starting a new firm: That firm is called C&F Partners.
- 175 “Charlie Carr has left K2”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Phillip Van Niekerk, July 10, 2017.
- 175 *The Irish Times*, published an article in 2016: That article by Peter Murtagh, “Denis O’Brien, the Dossier, and the Spy Who Came into the Dáil,” appeared on July 16, 2016.
- 175 *The Irish Times* reported that Hollingsworth: The newspaper reported that Mark Hollingsworth declined to comment for its article.
- 176 who now ran a blog: The blog run by Clare Rewcastle-Brown was called Sarawak Report.
- 176 Jho Low, had sought to set up meetings in 2014: Those efforts are mentioned in June 15, 2017, filing that was part of a forfeiture action brought by the Justice Department against the Viceroy Hotel Group. A spokeswoman for K2 Intelligence didn’t respond to an inquiry asking about ties between the firm, Jho Low, or his representatives.
- 176 Rewcastle Brown wrote on her blog: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Clare Rewcastle Brown, July 13, 2016.
- 177 Giannakopoulos and Hollingsworth worked with K2 Intelligence: That article by Bradley Hope and Jenny Strasberg ran on February 26, 2020, “Soft-Bank’s Rajeev Misra Used Campaign of Sabotage to Hobble Internal Rivals.” Rajeev Misra denied paying for the operation.
- 177 stolen from a law firm in Panama: The firm was Mossack Fonseca.
- 178 “You may recall that we did stories”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Simon Goodley, February 21, 2017.
- 178 “Below is a very rough draft”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Glenn Simpson, April 18, 2013.
- 179 “Clearly, the story is dependent on PP searches”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Simon Bowers, March 21, 2017.
- 179 “My source will not accept anything less than \$2,000”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Richard Hynes, June 16, 2017.
- 179 “Please email me your hit-list”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Alexander Yearsley, June 22, 2016.

180 “Since we spoke on the phone tonight”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Christopher Steele, April 29, 2016.

CHAPTER 11: OUTED, EPISODE 2

182 Ohr’s wife: Her name is Nellie Ohr.

182 At the coffee shop, Simpson handed Ohr: Handwritten notes of Bruce Ohr dated December 10, 2016.

183 Kramer started getting a stream of calls from reporters: Testimony of David Kramer in *Gubarev v. BuzzFeed*, dated December 13, 2017.

187 researching a book about the topic: Ken Bensinger’s book about the FIFA scandal, *Red Card: How the U.S. Blew the Whistle on the World’s Biggest Sports Scandal*, was published in 2018 by Simon & Schuster.

190 He deleted all his files about the dossier: Steele made this disclosure in 2020 during his testimony in the London lawsuit brought by the principals of Alfa Bank. He didn’t explain his actions and the timing of them.

192 a “garbage document”: Bob Woodward made that remark to Chris Wallace of Fox News on April 21, 2019.

193 Peter Strzok, said in a later interview: He made those comments during an interview in *The Atlantic*, September 4, 2020.

CHAPTER 12: TROJAN WARS

196 known commonly as Pegasus: NSO, the spyware’s maker, says it should only be legally used.

196 Citizen Lab’s encounter: Raphael Satter of the Associated Press detailed this episode in a January 25, 2019, article, “Undercover Agents Target Toronto-Based Cybersecurity Watchdog Group Which Reported Key Details in Khashoggi Case.”

197 he posted them on his personal website: Those aerial photos can be found at <https://www.johnscottrailton.com/kite-aerial-photography-kit/>.

199 he kept receiving weather alerts: Ronan Farrow wrote about those alerts in *Catch and Kill*.

199 A reporter for a news website, *Motherboard*, exposed the practice: Joseph Cox wrote an article on January 8, 2019, “I Gave a Bounty Hunter \$300. Then He Located Our Phone.”

201 Raphael Satter, the AP reporter: Satter described his interactions with John Scott-Railton and subsequent encounter with Michel Lambert on January 26, 2019, “Undercover Agents Target Cybersecurity Watchdog.”

CHAPTER 13: ROCK STARS

- 209 the Democracy Integrity Project pulled in more than \$7 million: the figure is drawn from group's 2018 990 filing.
- 210 *The Wall Street Journal* broke a story: Mark Maremont's article about Sergei Millian ran on January 24, 2017, "Key Claims in Trump Dossier Said to Come from Head of Russian-American Business Group."
- 210 which identified Millian as "Source D": *The Washington Post* piece by Rosalind S. Helderman and Tom Hamburger appeared on March 29, 2017, "Who Is 'Source D'? The Man Said to Be Behind the Trump-Russia Dossier's Most Salacious Claims."
- 211 "They now have specific concrete": That comment appeared in an April 13, 2017, article in *The Guardian* by Luke Harding and others, "British Spies Were First to Spot Trump Team's Links with Russia."
- 212 one 2017 show: That episode of *The Rachel Maddow Show* was broadcast on December 29, 2017.
- 214 Stories about him or Fusion GPS: John Cassidy of *The New Yorker* wrote about Simpson on January 10, 2018, "The Digger Who Commissioned the Trump-Russia Dossier Speaks." Matt Flegenheimer wrote about him for *The New York Times* on January 8, 2018, "Fusion GPS Founder Hauled from the Shadows for the Russia Election Investigation."
- 216 The lawsuit against BuzzFeed was dismissed based on a judge's finding that the dossier was a government document and thus fair game for publication.
- 217 *Russian Roulette*: That book by Michael Isikoff and David Corn, which was subtitled *The Inside Story of Putin's War on America and the Election of Donald Trump*, was published in 2018 by Twelve.
- 217 *Collusion*: Luke Harding's book, subtitled *Secret Meetings, Dirty Money, and How Russia Helped Donald Trump Win*, was published in 2017 by Vintage.
- 219 "He's James Bond": Rupert Allason's comment appeared in an *NBC News* report, "Christopher Steele, Trump Dossier Author, Is a Real-Life James Bond."
- 222 a panel discussion at the International Spy Museum: The talk can be found at <https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4708289/user-clip-scott-shane-nyt>.
- 222 A former CIA spy on the same panel: The former CIA officer was Jonna Hiestand Mendez.

CHAPTER 14: EPISODE 1: “DOUBLE AGENT”

- 224 The other report went to an executive at Alaco: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Nikos Asimakopoulos, February 23, 2013.
- 225 In court filings, ENRC said: At the time of this writing, Neil Gerrard’s lawsuit against ENRC and Diligence was continuing. (Black Cube was not a defendant in the action.)
- 225 *Intelligence Online*, published an article: The article about the hack of Mark Hollingsworth’s email was published on July 10, 2019, “London’s Business Intelligence Community Braces Itself for Imminent Leak.”
- 226 The email’s subject line: The email was dated August 4, 2019.
- 228 the *Evening Standard*: Mark Hollingsworth’s article appeared on September 15, 2017, “SFO Is Stepping Up Its Kazakh Mining Probe.”
- 228 “I have also arranged for this”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Philip Van Niekerk, September 15, 2017.
- 228 “As you know, I am always happy”: Email from Mark Hollingsworth to Rinat Akhmetshin, December 18, 2017.
- 229 Yuri Shvets: He did not respond to emails seeking comment.
- 230 made a big reveal: The disclosure that ENRC was paying Mark Hollingsworth and Robert Trevelyan was made by ENRC lawyer, Justin Michaelson, in a declaration dated December 5, 2019.
- 230 Robert Trevelyan: He did not respond to emails seeking comment.
- 230 Dmitry Vozianov: He did not respond to emails seeking comment.
- 231 “We need very much strong language”: Email from Dmitry Vozianov to Mark Hollingsworth, February 7, 2018.

CHAPTER 15: SHINY OBJECT

- 233 *The Plot Against the President*: Lee Smith’s book, which was subtitled *The True Story of How Congressman Devin Nunes Uncovered the Biggest Political Scandal in U.S. History*, was published in 2019 by Center Street.
- 234 *Crime in Progress*: Glenn Simpson and Peter Fritsch’s book, which was subtitled *Inside the Steele Dossier and the Fusion GPS Investigation of Donald Trump*, was published in 2019 by Random House.
- 235 “Some of the most sensational claims”: *The New York Times* article about the Mueller report by Scott Shane, Adam Goldman, and Matthew Rosen-

berg appeared on April 19, 2019, “Mueller Report Likely to Renew Scrutiny of Steele Dossier.”

235 “all but dismissed many key claims”: That *Journal* article by Alan Cullison and Dustin Volz appeared on April 19, 2019, “Mueller Report Dismisses Many Steele Dossier Claims.”

235 sounded similar themes: Peter Fritsch’s comments about the dossier’s accuracy were reported on November 22, 2019, by James D. Walsh in *New York* magazine in “Fusion GPS Lights a Candle for the Pee Tape.”

236 “The interview was contentious at first”: Natasha Bertrand’s article appeared on *Politico* on July 9, 2019, “Trump Dossier Author Steele Gets 16-Hour DOJ Grilling.”

238 supposed FSB source: This undated memo was sent by Cody Shearer to a journalist.

239 he wrote in an op-ed piece in *The Washington Post*: His op-ed was published on February 8, 2018, “Devin Nunes Is Investigating Me. Here’s the Truth.”

239 Winer also told: His testimony is contained in the report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

240 “When you actually get into the details”: Michael Isikoff made those comments on John Ziegler’s podcast, *Free Speech Broadcasting*, on December 5, 2018.

240 he invited Maddow: Rachel Maddow appeared on Michael Isikoff’s podcast, *Skullduggery*, on October 31, 2019.

241 to write a series of columns: Erik Wemple wrote fourteen columns about the media’s coverage of the dossier between December 13, 2019, and August 19, 2020.

243 “that Cohen entered the Czech Republic through Germany”: That story by Gregg Gordon and Peter Stone appeared on April 13, 2018, “Sources: Mueller Has Evidence Cohen Was in Prague in 2016, Confirming Parts of the Dossier.”

243 The same reporters doubled down: Gregg Gordon and Peter Stone published their other Cohen/Prague story on December 27, 2019, “Cell Signal Puts Cohen outside Prague around Time of Purported Russian Meeting.”

243 “Trump Campaign Aides Had Repeated Contacts”: That article by Michael S. Schmidt, Mark Mazzetti, and Matt Apuzzo appeared on February 14, 2017. (Subsequently, evidence emerged that one Trump aide, Paul

Manafort, worked closely with a suspected Russian operative named Konstantin Kilimnick.)

243 They reported that Paul Manafort: That article by Luke Harding and Dan Collins appeared in *The Guardian* on November 27, 2018, “Manafort Held Secret Talks with Assange in Ecuadorian Embassy, Sources Say.”

244 they got stiff-armed: The only changes that *The Guardian* made to the article was to include denials from Assange and Manafort that the meeting had taken place. In an email to me, a spokesperson for the paper said it continued to “stand by” the article.

CHAPTER 16: DINNER WITH NATALIA

247 In 2019, the Justice Department had indicted her: Federal prosecutors announced Veselnitskaya’s indictment on January 8, 2019. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/russian-attorney-natalya-veselnitskaya-charged-obstruction-justice-connection-civil>.

248 Prevezon agreed to pay a \$5.9 million fine: The announcement of the case’s settlement was made on May 12, 2017. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/acting-manhattan-us-attorney-announces-59-million-settlement-civil-money-laundering-and>.

250 a bipartisan Senate report: This was the report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

251 a decision Akhmetshin had appealed: In late 2020, a federal court granted his appeal and sent the case back to a trial court for reconsideration.

252 Claims filed by ENRC against Mark Hollingsworth and others: At the time of this writing, ENRC’s lawsuits against Mark Hollingsworth, the Serious Fraud Office and others were continuing. Defendants in all the actions have denied any wrongdoing.

253 In a lengthy article in 2018: Dexter Filkins’s article in *The New Yorker* ran on October 8, 2018, “Was There a Connection Between a Russian Bank and the Trump Campaign?”

254 In his testimony, Steele appeared to display a consistent attitude: Steele testified in the Alfa Bank–related case on March 17, 2020.

255 the judge overseeing the case issued his ruling: That ruling was issued on August 7, 2020. <https://www.casemine.com/judgement/uk/5f06a0562c94e070322b31e6>.

256 “We were no longer in the contract with Fusion”: Steele testified in the Gubarev case on July 23, 2020.

CHAPTER 17: THE COLLECTOR

262 when those interview notes hit the internet: The notes of Igor Danchenko’s interviews were released by the Justice Department on July 17, 2020.

264 He said during his FBI interviews: Igor Danchenko was interviewed over the course of three days in late January 2017.

266 Luke Harding: He did not respond to emails seeking comment about this discrepancy.

269 Igor Danchenko: His lawyer Mark Schamel didn’t respond to written questions.

270 He told Luke Harding: Igor Danchenko’s interview appeared in *The Guardian* on October 21, 2020, “Trump’s False Russian Spy Claims Put Me in Danger.”

270 published on the same day: Danchenko’s interview in the *Times* on October 21, 2020, “Analyst Who Reported the Infamous Trump Tape Rumor Wants to Clear His Name.”

271 issued a long-awaited report: The fifth volume of the Senate Select Intelligence Committee’s report was issued on August 18, 2020.

272 a documentary: The name of Alex Gibney’s two-part film was *Agents of Chaos*.

276 arrested an Israeli-based private investigator: At the time of this writing, the charges against that investigator were still pending.